

French Soccer Is So Fascinating!

Wycombe Wanderers 2,
Jeunesse Sportive Audunoise 1

FRESHLY arrived from France on Good Friday morning, the Jeunesse Sportive Club of the French steel town of Audun-le-Tiche spread entente cordiale and fascinating soccer-with-a-difference in their Loakes Park tour game against Wycombe Wanderers.

The French amateurs proved tough nuts to crack and it was only when it seemed that a draw would suit everybody's honour that Paul Bates slipped Ivor Ashby's pass into the net for the winning goal.

As it was, France might easily have emerged victorious had not the tall, copper-headed danger man Mancini been switched from the wing to inside-left in the second half. This move cramped his terrific shooting ability.

Facing an unpredictable Wanderers attack, which alternated bright bursts of power play with the most indifferent movements, young Garot was every Englishman's idea of what a Continental goalkeeper should be like. He made the day of the small boys behind his goal.

Spectacular as a catherine wheel and as nimble as a circus acrobat, he scorned the simple but equally effective methods of Wycombe's Ken Brown. His Napoleonic gestures and rapid orders kept all the French defenders on the alert.

The third outstanding Audunoise player was the tiny right-winger Kirsch, whose high speed dribbling left full-back Alastair Lewis puzzled more than once.

Contrasting the long-ball technique with the accurate short-passing French game, the Wanderers looked very lively during the first half and gave Garot opportunity enough to yo-yo across goal.

But he was beautifully beaten after 18 minutes when the rapidly improving Ivor Ashby hurtled near the ground to head in Alan Murphy's centre. This was a precision job. Within two minutes the French were level. Inside-right Markut, who had previously made Brown fumble a blistering shot, equalised after Brown had made a great save from Kirsch.

Both attacks were clever enough to create plenty of openings — Wycombe's chief weakness lying on the left, where Lewis and Dennis Atkins were far from dominant.

ELUSIVE BALL

The hard ground and elusive ball ruined many movements and Wycombe's centre-forward Paul Bates seemed as unhappy as most in the conditions. Cliff Trott, who harried the Frenchmen tirelessly, was the most consistent Wycombe raider, although Ashby looked the likeliest marksman and left-winger Murphy had a very efficient and tidy game.

After an entertaining first period the standard slumped in the second half. John Beck played very soundly in a Wanderers' defence which gradually squeezed the thrust out of the French attack.

But the Wanderers looked equally unlikely to score. Bates missed one apparently open goal before scoring the winner.